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23 October 1962

By:

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE

SUBJECT: Executive Committee Meeting on 23 October 1962
6:00 p.m. All members present plus Counsel
for Defense Department

1. Committee reviewed the blockade proclamation and approved it. It was signed by the President at 6:00 p.m.
2. The President instructed McNamara to review all details of instructions to the Fleet Commanders regarding procedures to be followed in the blockade. There was an extended discussion of actions to be taken under various assumed Soviet resistance activities such as (a) failing to stop, (b) refusing right to board, (c) ships turning around, heading in another direction, etc.
3. Discussion of the effect on U.S. industry by chartering and preempting the use of 20 or 30 American ships. Gilpatric reported that this would have little or no effect on the American economy. McCone questioned these findings; however Gilpatric said that this had been thoroughly studied and McCone's concerns as expressed at the morning meeting were unfounded. The Attorney General stated that it was within the law to use foreign bottoms, however decision was made to preempt U.S. bottoms and not worry about the consequences because they would not be serious.

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4. In the prolonged discussion of report on Civil Defense problems, the President seemed particularly concerned over the situation if we should launch attacks which might result in four or five missiles being delivered on the United States. DOD spokesmen stated that the area covered by the 1100 mile missiles involved 92 million people. They felt that fall-out space was available enough

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not equipped for about 40 million. The President asked what emergency steps could be taken. Replied that many arrangements could be made without too much publicity, such as repositioning food, actually obtaining space, putting up shelter signs, etc. I got the conclusion that not very much could or would be done; that whatever was done would involve a great deal of publicity and public alarm.

Prior to the departure of Secretary McNamara at approximately 7:00 o'clock, McCone (who had not been called upon for an intelligence appraisal) stated to the President that he felt certain intelligence should be reported to the meeting prior to the departure of Secretary McNamara as some items observed by the Intelligence Community might prove of great significance.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

McCone stated that these significant developments should be drawn to the attention of all interested elements of the Government. On morning of 24 October, McCone called Secretary McNamara and General Taylor, emphasizing the above.

JOHN A. McCONE
Director

JAM/mfb